

works. None of the bridges in the Los Angeles area that were seismically retrofitted failed or suffered major damage as a result of the earthquake. The 12 bridges that were severely damaged during the earthquake had not been fully retrofitted.

The Congress responded quickly by providing much needed additional financial aid to victims of the earthquake through emergency supplemental funds. However, we need not only to provide assistance for repairs, but also to provide the flexibility to allow States to make sensible investments to prevent future losses.

I am very pleased that the Congress, led by Senator Boxer, has acted again to provide an additional tool to California and other States that may face similar natural disasters. This seismic retrofitting legislation does not increase

Federal expenditures but allows States the flexibility to determine their own bridge needs. Together, these actions will not only speed recovery from the California earthquake but will also help mitigate potential losses to life and property in any State by future earthquakes.

S. 1789 will empower States throughout the Nation to make critically important investments in infrastructure to prevent highway bridge collapses. Ultimately, it will save both lives and dollars.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

The White House,
March 17, 1994.

NOTE: S. 1789, approved March 17, was assigned Public Law No. 103-220.

Remarks at the Bosnian Federation Agreement Signing Ceremony

March 18, 1994

The President. President Izetbegovic, President Tudjman, Prime Minister Silajdzic, Mr. Zubak: The Secretary of State, Mr. Lake, the Vice President, and I are happy to be joined by you, as well as by others here today. We have the Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia, Vitaly Churkin; representing the European Union troika, the Foreign Ministers of Greece, Mr. Papoulias, of Belgium, Mr. Claes, of Germany, Mr. Kinkel; and of course, David Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg, who have been the cochairs of the international conference.

In addition to that, we're very pleased to be joined by the Ambassadors to the UNPROFOR nations who have been so active in working for peace and in preserving the peace, General Shalikhvili, Ambassador Albright, and Members of the Congress. In the front row, Senator Lugar, Senator Stevens, Senator Levin, Senator Hatch, Congressman Lantos, and I believe Congressman McCloskey is here. There he is, in the second row. So we thank all of you for coming today.

We have come to bear witness to a moment of hope. For 33 months the flames of war have raged through the nations of the former Yugoslavia. By signing these agreements today, Bosnian and Croatian leaders have acted to turn

back those flames and to begin the difficult process of reconciliation.

Around the globe, the tension between ethnic identity and statehood presents one of the great problems of our time. But nowhere have the consequences been more tragic than in the former Yugoslavia. There nationalists and religious factions aggravated by Serbian aggression have erupted in a fury of ethnic cleansing and brutal atrocity.

The agreements signed today offer one of the first clear signals that parties to this conflict are willing to end the violence and begin a process of reconstruction. The accords call for a federation between Muslims and Croats of Bosnia. This Muslim-Croat entity has agreed on the principles of a confederation with Croatia. Together these steps can help support the ideal of a multiethnic Bosnia and provide a basis for Muslims and Croats to live again in peace as neighbors and compatriots. The agreements are as important for Croatia's future as they are for Bosnia's. And it is the hope of all present today that the Serbs will join in this process toward peace as well.

These agreements are a testament to the perseverance and to the resolve of many people: the Croatian and Bosnian diplomats who kept

probing for openings toward peace; the U.N. soldiers from many nations, here represented today, who have worked to bring both stability and humanitarian supplies; the NATO pilots who have helped put our power in the service of diplomacy.

I want to praise the leadership and courage of those who have come to Washington to sign these agreements, especially President Izetbegovic and President Tudjman. I also want to recognize the tireless efforts of Thorvald Stoltenberg and David Owen and of course our own Cy Vance, who is not here today, and especially to express my personal appreciation to the skilled diplomacy of Ambassador Charles Redman. Thank you, sir, for your work.

All of these people have done much to bring us to this point of agreement. Through Ambassador Redman's efforts and in many other ways, our administration has worked with our NATO allies, the European Union, Russia, the U.N., and others to help end this conflict. The fact that we have done this work together has made a significant difference. And to the Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia, I say a special thank you, sir, for your renewed energy in this area and our common hopes.

We have engaged in this work because the United States has clear interests at stake: an interest in helping prevent the spread of a wider war in Europe, an interest in showing that NATO remains a credible force for peace, an interest in helping to stem the terrible, destabilizing flows of refugees this struggle is generating, and perhaps clearly a humanitarian interest we all share in stopping the continuing slaughter of innocents in Bosnia.

The documents signed here are only first steps, but they are clearly steps in the right direction. If they lead to an overall negotiated settlement, if a lasting peace takes hold in this war-torn land, the ceremony will be remembered as an important event. Whether that comes to pass will depend less on our words today than on the actions of Muslims, Croats, and Serbs on the ground tomorrow and in the days to come.

For while documents like these can define the parameters of peace, the people of the region themselves must create that peace. Economic, political, and security arrangements for the new federation must be given a chance to work. The cease-fire between Croats and Bosnian Government forces must hold. Croats and

Muslims who have fought with such intensity must now apply that same intensity to restoring habits of tolerance and coexistence.

The issue of the Petrinja region of Croatia must be resolved. Serbia and the Serbs of Bosnia cannot sidestep their own responsibility to achieve an enduring peace.

The new progress toward peace will likely come under attack by demagogues, by rogue riflemen, by all those who believe they can profit most from continued violence, aggression, and human suffering. Such attacks must be met with the same steadiness and leadership that have produced these agreements today.

Neither the United States nor the international community can guarantee the success of this initiative. But the U.S. has stood by the parties as they have taken risks for peace, and we will continue to do so. I have told Presidents Izetbegovic and Tudjman that the U.S. is prepared to contribute to the economic reconstruction that will bolster these agreements. And as I have said before, if an acceptable, enforceable settlement can be reached, the U.S. is prepared through NATO to help implement it.

All across Bosnia and Croatia, communities and entire peoples were once connected by ancient bridges, like the great stone arch in Mostar which for centuries stood as the city's proud symbol. Today, too many of those bridges have been reduced to rubble or closed by force. The challenge for parties to this conflict is to rebuild the bonds that those bridges represent. The announcement that Sarajevo's bridge of brotherhood and unity soon will reopen is a hopeful sign that the parties can begin to span the divide of hatred and violence.

The work ahead is indeed daunting, but all of us in the international community are committed to help. Together, let us strive for peace.

Thank you.

[At this point, Foreign Minister Karolos Papoulias of Greece, Presidents Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Franjo Tudjman of Croatia, and Bosnian Croat representative Kresimir Zubak each made statements.]

The President. Ladies and gentlemen, today we have witnessed an act of great statesmanship. Now we must hope that the courage embodied by these agreements will inspire further acts of reason, reconstruction and progress to implement them, to make them real in the lives of

the people whose leaders are represented here today.

We also must hope, I will say again, that the Serbs will join in this effort for a wider peace. We invite them and urge them to do so.

Over 150 years ago, the Balkan poet Ivan Jukic wrote the following line: "Only those are heroes who know how to live with their brothers." Let us hope we are beginning to learn that lesson in this troubled land.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9 a.m. in Room 450 of the Old Executive Office Building. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Haris Silajdzic of Bosnia-Herzegovina; Foreign Minister Willy Claes of Belgium; Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel of Germany; Lord David Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg, Cochairmen, and Cyrus Vance, former Cochairman, International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia; and Ambassador Charles Redman, U.S. Special Envoy for the Former Yugoslavia.

Statement on Additional California Earthquake Assistance

March 18, 1994

The people of southern California are responding courageously to the challenge of restoring their lives and their communities in the wake of the earthquake. From the first day, our administration has been working extremely hard to fulfill the Federal Government's obligation to help make that possible.

This new assistance reflects new costs that have come to our attention in recent weeks.

My administration is continuing to monitor the situation, and we will continue to provide the necessary assistance as additional needs become evident.

NOTE: This statement was included in a White House statement announcing the release of emergency funds for California earthquake recovery and other recent disasters.

Statement by the Director of Communications on United Nations Security Council Action on the Hebron Massacre

March 18, 1994

The United Nations Security Council has today adopted a resolution condemning the Hebron mosque massacre and calling for measures to safeguard the security of the Palestinians.

President Clinton expressed the horror of the American people at the time of the tragic Hebron murders. The President said, "The enemies of peace must not be allowed to triumph. Prompt resumption of negotiations to begin implementation of the Israel-Palestinian Declaration of Principles is the only answer to extremist violence on both sides."

The President's decision to allow passage of the resolution was made in the context of the agreement today by Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon to return to negotiations in April and the high-

level contacts between Israel and the PLO that will take place in coming days.

The President endorses the call made by the Security Council today for Israel and the PLO to redouble their efforts to realize this goal as soon as possible. The United States stands ready to do all it can to help the parties, but with passage of this resolution it is time for them to return to the negotiating table.

The United States abstained on two paragraphs in the preamble to the resolution because of our strong objections to references made there to "occupied Palestinian territory" and to Jerusalem. The President said that his position on these matters has not changed. As Israel and the PLO have agreed, these are issues which can be decided only in negotiations on